

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF EXECUTIVES IN BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS AS REVEALED THROUGH SELECTED SCALES OF CALIFORNIA PSYCHOLOGICAL INVENTORY[#]

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The study examined the personality characteristics of business executives through selected scales (viz., Dominance, Capacity for Status, Sociability, Responsibility, Achievement via Independence, Managerial Potential, and Work Orientation) of California Psychological Inventory (Gough, 1987). The sample consisted of 98 executives from four renowned business organizations in Pakistan. The study explored the differences among the personality traits of successful and unsuccessful executives: technical and nontechnical executives, younger and older executives. It was found that successful, nontechnical, and older executives showed more leadership traits as compared to the other groups. The differences between personality characteristics of Pakistani executives with that of American have also been studied. The American executives scored higher on all scales except Dominance as compared to Pakistani executives.

Leadership is a subject that has long excited interest among scholars and laymen alike. According to the 'Penguin Dictionary of Psychology' the only proper use for the term leadership is to characterize the exercise of authority and influence within social group; that is, to function as a leader is to manifest leadership. It is often used, however, as if it were a personality trait, as if there were a collection of specific skills that reflect leadership capability (Reber, 1985). The persons at executive posts in organizations are usually considered as

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having leadership qualities (Stogdill, 1988; White & Bednar, 1986; Yukl & Van Fleet, 1992).

There are a number of instruments which measure the personality traits of leadership, such as, Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF: Cattell, Eber, & Tatsuoka, 1970); California Psychological Inventory (CPI: Gough, 1987); and Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS: Edwards, 1959). Among all these, the CPI as assessment tool has been the most well researched tool which is extensively used in individual counseling, job placement, evaluation, and selection for academic superior jobs (Clark & Clark, 1990; Gough, 1969; Hergrave & Hiatt, 1989). A number of studies on CPI have been carried out to study persons in different occupations, for instance, teachers (Kegel-Flom, 1985); police officers (Pugh, 1985); etc. The CPI profile can be used as a device for depicting and recognizing management style, approaches, and skills as well as interpersonal style and 'best fit' for certain work environments (Clark & Clark, 1990). A number of personality studies have been conducted about managers and executives (Barron & Egan, 1968; Gough, 1984; Megargee, 1972; Meyer & Davis, 1992; Rawls & Rawls, 1968).

Researches done on CPI indicate that some scales are good for studying personality characteristics of people at higher levels, for example, Rawls and Rawls (1968) reported that Dominance scale significantly differentiated the most successful executives from least successful executives. According to Medcof (1990) dominance is a desirable quality in managers. Hollander (1961) reviewed research which indicated that persons perceived to have high status were more acceptable as authority figures. The Capacity for Status scale of CPI taps the same construct. According to Boney and Drake (as cited in Bass, 1981) there is positive correlation between Sociability and the leadership qualities. The Responsibility scale of CPI is also important in the study of leadership traits because generally the people at executive posts perceive their responsibilities to be broader and more far reaching than others (Hase & Goldberg, 1967). In the scale of Achievement via Independence, Meyer and Walder (as cited in Shujaat, 1992) found that more successful executives were higher in their achievements. According to Gough (1984) the scale of Managerial Potential is used to assess interest and talent for managerial pursuits. A study has found that people at higher posts were found high on Managerial scores (Zdep, 1969). The scale of Work Orientation is designed to identify persons who are industrious, and researchers have found business executives to rate higher on this scale (Gough, 1985). With the background of all these studies, the same seven scales of CPI were selected in the present

study, to explore the personality traits of executives in business organizations of Pakistan. These scales are: Dominance, Capacity for Status, Sociability, Responsibility, Achievement via Independence, Managerial Potential, and Work Orientation.

The specific purpose of this study was: (i) To see if the more successful business executives (as defined in terms of salary and promotion) differed significantly from the executives who are not so successful in terms of personality characteristics on the said seven scales; (ii) to see if the nontechnical executives present a different personality characteristics from technical executives; (iii) to see whether the profile of young executives (below 40 years) is different from those who are older (above 40 years) and; (iv) to see if the personality characteristics of Pakistani executives is different from that of their American counterparts.

METHOD

Pilot Studies

The seven selected scales of CPI consist of 243 items, among which 52 items are common in more than one scale. Therefore, total number of 191 items covered the seven scales. Items of these scales were identified and a questionnaire form was prepared.

Two pilot studies were carried out to see whether subjects comprehend items in real sense.

Pilot Study I

In this study the questionnaire (American version) was given to 10 masters' final year male students at Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. They were asked to translate the items into Urdu. Translated items were checked and compared with Urdu translation by Ahmed (1986) in order to see whether the meaning of items were understood by the subjects correctly or not. It was found that about 15 to 20 items were left untranslated and about 15 items were translated differently. Thus these items showed comprehension/language problems.

The questionnaire (American Version) was also administered to 10 executives of medium sized business organizations. Questionnaire was administered according to standard instructions as given in the

manual (Gough, 1987). It was interesting to find that same items were left out by executives because they could not understand the meaning in a true sense.

Findings of this pilot study showed that there were some American slangs/phrases which were difficult to understand in Pakistan. Therefore, it was decided that British version of the CPI may be used for the present study. Before using the British Version in the main study, it was also pilot tested.

Pilot Study II

The procedure outlined above was repeated with the British version of the CPI. First it was given to 10 male students of masters at Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, for Urdu translation. Then each translated item was checked and compared with original items. It was found that all the items were translated correctly. It showed that items did not pose any comprehension/language problem.

The questionnaire (British Version) was also administered to 5 executives of business organizations to verify the correct comprehension of items. Findings showed that this questionnaire did not indicate any comprehension/ language problem with Pakistani educated sample.

Thus it was finally decided that the British version of CPI would be used in the main study.

Main Study

Sample

The sample ($N = 98$) consisted of 78 middle and 20 top level management personnel. It was obtained from four leading and renowned business organizations in Pakistan, namely:

Organization A (Bata Shoe Company): It is an international organization. Its one plant was sampled. This plant employs 5,000 workers of which 80 individuals were classified as "Managers".

Organization B (Packages): This organization is a nationwide concern. One plant was sampled for this study. This division employs approximately 3,000 workers of which 45 individuals were classified as "Managers".

Organization C (Siemens): It is an international organization. For this study only one division of this organization having 500 workers of which 30 were classified as "Managers".

Organization D (Kohinoor Textile Mills): This is a large national organization and it employs 3,000 workers in the unit. In the sampled unit 25 were classified as "Managers."

In the first instance the administration of organizations was requested to identify successful and unsuccessful executives on the basis of performance and efficiency defined by the researcher. Initial contact revealed reluctance by the administration in the identification of the managers. So it was decided that all of them may be included for study and subsequently bifurcated on the basis of a criterion. The criterion of successful executives was determined by the number of promotions and salary increases to which the employee had ascended, relative to others of his age and with same length of experience in the organization. The group called successful executives consisted of those subjects who got first promotion after four years or less. Unsuccessful executives were described as those who got first promotion after ten years or more, or got no promotion at all.

Out of 98 executives, 35 were classified as successful and 49 as unsuccessful, the remaining 14 can not be classified into these two categories according to the criteria of the present study. Therefore, they were not included in analysis related to this variable. In terms of technical and nontechnical jobs, 38 belonged to technical and 60 to nontechnical jobs; 60 were of age 40 years or below and 38 were of age above 40 years.

All of the male executives from each organization were included in the study except those who were not available during the period of data collection due to leave or other commitments.

Instrument

California Psychological Inventory

The description of the seven selected scales of CPI (Gough, 1987) are as follows:

- I. Dominance (Do): It is used to identify strong, dominant, influential and ascendant individuals who are able to take the initiative and exercise leadership.

- II. Capacity for Status (Cs): This scale is used to identify those qualities of ambition and self-assurance that underlie and lead to status. Status is a relative level of income, education, prestige, and power attained in one's social cultural milieu.
- III. Sociability (Sy): This scale differentiates people with an outgoing, sociable, participative temperament from those who shun involvement and avoid social visibility.
- IV. Responsibility (Re): It is used to identify people who are conscientious, responsible, articulate about rules and order, and who believe that life should be governed by reason.
- V. Achievement via Independence (Ai): It is used to predict achievement in settings where independence of thought, creativity, and self-actualization is rewarded.
- VI. Managerial Potential (Mp): This scale is designed to identify those who have talent for supervisory and managerial roles and who tend to seek out such positions.
- VII. Work Orientation (Wo): This scale measures sense of decision to work, the strength of the work ethic, and likelihood of performing well even in routine work.

Biographical datasheet

It was designed to collect demographic information like age, education, occupation, salary, number of promotions, and job experience, etc.

Procedure

Subjects were contacted in their respective organizations with the permission of the administration of the organizations. First, the subjects were ensured about the confidentiality of their responses, then they were given a data sheet to collect biographical information about them. Later CPI questionnaire was given with printed instructions, which were also verbally explained by the researcher. Subjects were told to read the instructions carefully, and mark the option either True (T) or False (F), whichever is applicable in their case. The questionnaire was administered individually.

RESULTS

First of all, Kuder-Richardson reliability coefficients were calculated for each scale and were compared with other studies carried out in Pakistan and America.

Table 1

Kuder Richardson reliability coefficients of selected CPI scales for Pakistani and American samples

Scales	K-R 20		
	a	b	c
I. Dominance (Do)	.71	.77	.70
II. Capacity for Status (Cs)	.68	.66	.60
III. Sociability (Sy)	.72	.69	.62
IV. Responsibility (Re)	.70	.83	.60
V. Achievement via Independence (Ai)	.56	.93	.62
VI. Managerial Potential (Mp)	.75	##	.71
VII. Work Orientation (Wo)	.75	##	.77

(a) Based on Megargee (1972); Gough (1984, 1987).

(b) Based on Ahmed (1986).

(c) Based on the present data.

Not available.

Table 1 shows that the Kuder Richardson reliability coefficients of CPI scales on the present sample as well as on American and Pakistani samples. In the present study the computed index of reliability ranges from .60 to .77. Highest reliability coefficient was of Work Orientation scale; a specific purpose scale based on items drawn from other scales. The results are comparable with the American data, which range from

.56 to .75. Dominance scale has highest reliability coefficient of .77. Ahmed's (1986) study also indicates high reliability coefficient of these scales, which ranges from .66 to .93. High reliability indices of all the scales indicate that items of scales are internally consistent.

The interscale correlations were further calculated to see the internal consistency of each scale.

Table 2

CPI scales intercorrelation matrices for Pakistani and American sample

Scales	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
I. Dominance						
II. Capacity for Status	.40 [*] (.64)					
III. Sociability	.54 ^{**} (.73)	.56 ^{**} (.68)				
IV. Responsibility	.34 ^{**} (.42)	.26 [*] (.55)	.21 (.38)			
V. Achievement via Independence	.17 (.45)	.61 ^{**} (.71)	.33 ^{**} (.44)	.36 ^{**} (.55)		
VI. Managerial Potential	.40 ^{**} #	.49 ^{**} #	.31 ^{**} #	.59 ^{**} (.65)	.58 ^{**} #	
VII. Work Orientation	.40 ^{**} #	.53 ^{**} #	.33 ^{**} #	.64 ^{**} #	.51 ^{**} #	.67 ^{**} (.74)

* $p < .01$; ** $p < .001$.

Figures in parentheses are based on American sample (Gough, 1987).

Not available on American sample.

The Table 2 shows that all the correlations except two are significant at $p < .001$, and scales correlate with each other in positive direction. The highest correlation is .69 between Work Orientation and Managerial Potential scales. The two lowest values are those of .17 for Achievement via Independence vs. Dominance, and .21 for Responsibility vs. Sociability, but their direction is positive. Pakistani data were compared with American data to see how close or otherwise

they are vis-a-vis the two national samples. Interscale correlations on American data are consistently high on all the scales as compared to Pakistani data. The reason for this may be that the Pakistani sample ($N = 98$) is small and belongs to a restricted group of executives while the American sample is quite large (Gough, 1987) and belongs to general population, which include people, belonging to different walks of life. The other reason is that it is a foreign test for the Pakistani sample.

t -test was applied in order to see the significance of difference between successful and unsuccessful business executives, technical vs. nontechnical executives, and senior vs. junior executives in terms of age. The differences in personality profile of Pakistani and American executives was also compared.

Table 3

Means, standard deviations, and t-values of successful and unsuccessful executives

Scales	Executives				t	p
	Successful ($n = 35$)		Unsuccessful ($n = 49$)			
	M	SD	M	SD		
I. Dominance	26.05	4.31	22.34	4.31	3.89	.000
II. Capacity for Status	15.31	3.13	12.46	3.58	3.86	.000
III. Sociability	21.51	3.86	19.24	4.17	2.56	.010
IV. Responsibility	24.28	4.19	23.51	3.89	0.86	.390
V. Achievement via Independence	19.97	3.90	17.02	4.22	3.30	.001
VI. Managerial Potential	19.45	5.34	17.35	4.50	1.92	.050
VII. Work Orientation	26.60	5.37	24.16	5.80	1.98	.050

$d.f=82$

The Table 3 shows that there are significant differences between successful and unsuccessful business executives on all the scales except Responsibility. On the scales of Dominance, Capacity for Status, Sociability, Achievement via Independence, Managerial Potential, and Work Orientation, the successful executives scored higher on all the scales as compared to unsuccessful executives. Thus these personality traits played significant role in their success in business.

Table 4

Means, standard deviations, and t-values of technical and nontechnical executives

Scales	Executives				<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Technical (<i>n</i> = 30)		Nontechnical (<i>n</i> = 60)			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
I. Dominance	22.66	4.95	24.85	4.39	2.05	.040
II. Capacity for Status	13.63	3.64	14.25	3.35	0.78	.440
III. Sociability	20.16	4.30	20.65	3.93	0.52	.600
IV. Responsibility	22.66	4.13	24.56	3.88	2.10	.040
V. Achievement via Independence	19.00	4.71	18.51	3.62	0.49	.620
VI. Managerial Potential	17.53	5.11	19.13	4.55	1.45	.150
VII. Work Orientation	24.83	5.84	26.25	5.52	1.10	.270

d.f.=88

The results in Table 4 show that there is a significant differences on only two scales, i.e., Dominance and Responsibility. Mean scores of nontechnical executives are higher on Dominance and Responsibility scales as compared to technical executives. So the nontechnical

executives have more qualities of dominance and responsibility as compared to technical ones. On the other scales no significant differences were found.

Table 5

Means, standard deviations, and t-values of executives with regard to different age groups

Scales	Age (in Years)				<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Below 40 (<i>n</i> = 60)		Above 40 (<i>n</i> = 38)			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
I. Dominance	22.95	4.72	25.39	4.15	2.69	.050
II. Capacity for Status	13.81	3.83	13.44	3.46	0.49	.620
III. Sociability	19.89	4.29	20.78	3.68	1.11	.260
IV. Responsibility	23.23	4.22	24.84	3.35	2.09	.040
V. Achievement via Independence	18.66	4.24	18.00	4.22	0.76	.450
VI. Managerial Potential	17.60	5.07	19.60	4.05	2.16	.030
VII. Work Orientation	25.16	5.66	26.44	5.50	1.11	.270

df=96

Table 5 shows that there is a significant difference between means of the two age groups on three scales, i.e., Dominance, Responsibility, and Managerial Potential. The executives of age group more than 40 years showed high scores on these scales as compared to the younger group.

Table 6

Means, standard deviations, and t-values of Pakistani and American executives

Scales	Executives				<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Pakistani (<i>n</i> = 98)		American (<i>n</i> = 185)			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
I. Dominance	23.89	4.64	24.64	5.10	1.47	.220
II. Capacity for Status	13.67	3.67	19.12	3.69	140.27	.000
III. Sociability	20.23	4.07	22.98	4.33	26.92	.000
IV. Responsibility	23.85	3.97	28.56	4.35	79.70	.000
V. Achievement via Independence	18.40	4.22	24.70	4.90	116.26	.000
VI. Managerial Potential	18.37	4.78	25.71	4.42	116.90	.000
VII. Work Orientation	25.66	5.60	34.15	3.70	223.34	.000

d.f.=281; Source of American data (Gough, 1987)

The personality profile of Pakistani executives was compared with American executives. The Table 6 shows that there is a significant difference in profile of Pakistani business executives and American business executives, on six out of seven scales. Only on Dominance scale the difference of mean score is not significant. On all of the other scales the American executives show higher mean scores as compared to the Pakistani executives.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to assess the personality traits on leadership qualities of Pakistani business executives. Any organization is expected to comprise of workers of diversified skills, abilities, and personal qualities. These range from an outstanding and enterprising individual to a steady worker who might not possess the qualities that

bring him to the forefront. Keeping in view this assumption, present study was carried out to see personality characteristics of successful or unsuccessful executives.

When the difference between successful and unsuccessful executives was computed, significant difference was found between the two groups on Do, Cs, Sy, Ai, Mp, and Wo scales. No significant difference was found on Re scale. The mean score of successful executives was high on the scales as compared to unsuccessful executives. The difference in Do and Cs shows that successful executives tend to be more forceful, assertive, usually like to assume leadership roles, have more initiative and would like to direct others rather than being passive followers. On Sy scale the difference indicated that successful executives tend to be more participating and sociable as compared to the other group. Ai scale difference reflects the tendency to be more independent minded, can be innovative and desirous of freedom in decision making. Scores on Mp and Wo scales differed between the two groups which indicates that the more successful executives have a talent for supervisory and managerial roles and have a sense of dedication to work. These results are suggestive of the fact that unsuccessful executives did not lack sense of duty, conscientious or organized approach but are wanting in other qualities like dominance, assertion, ambition, and sociability prerequisites of social effectiveness. This can be visibly seen in difference on Do, Cs, Sy, and Ai scales. This supports the assumption that successful executives will have an elevated profile on such scales. Similar results were obtained in the studies of Rawls and Rawls (1968).

The present study also found the significant differences between mean scores of technical and nontechnical executives on Do and Re. The technical executives include engineers belonging to different areas; whereas nontechnical executives include designations of managers who were responsible for administration, marketing, personnel management, etc. Nontechnical executives scored higher on Do and Re, which indicates that they are dominant, responsible, conscientious. These two categories are in the expected direction as demanded by their nature of duties in the organizational set up. Dealing with individuals requires more personal thrust and "rule bound" approach than the skill in maintenance of machines/equipments.

The study also found significant differences on means of Do, Re, and Mp between executives of two age groups. Executives belonging to age group of above 40 years scored higher on Do scale which means

they are more domineering, assertive, and inclined to express and defend their own opinions. This can be a result of their roles which demand such qualities. Re differed between two groups thus suggesting that senior executives are more orderly, self-disciplined, and conscientious; regulated by reasons and regulations. The two age groups differed on Mp scales. Executives belonging to age group above 40 years have higher mean scores on this scale. This suggests that senior executives have talent for supervisory and managerial roles. They are goal-oriented, responsible, expect cooperation from others, are ambitious, mature, and clear in their thinking as compared to the younger lot. No significant difference was found between two groups on Cs, Sy, Ai, and Wo scales. On the whole, profile of executives belonging to age group above 40 years indicates that senior people are more dominant, responsible, and conscientious as compared to young executives. This is suggestive of the fact that there is a relationship between these scales and more responsible position and status in any organization.

The present study also found the difference between Pakistani executives and American executives. Mean scores of American executives are high as compared to Pakistani executives on all scales except Do scale. The profile of American executives indicates that they are more ambitious, independent, friendly, take their duty seriously, have strong drive to do well, are socially effective and possess more sense of dedication to work as compared to Pakistani executives. This could be a reflection of our sociocultural milieu which, as compared to American set-up, is more controlling and less demanding in terms of resourcefulness, initiative, and ambition.

By and large, the present study indicates that there is a difference between profiles of successful (who possess leadership qualities) and unsuccessful executives in terms of some personality traits like assertion, dominance, desire for excelling, and achieving at the top. Sociability pattern of two groups also differ.

While this study offers an insight into the differences between the more successful and the less successful executives, it does not mean that it was due to these personal qualities that one group was more successful than the other. However, this study paves way for future longitudinal studies aimed at looking into personality differences in selectees in their early career, and their later performance. Such studies will indicate if a particular personality profile is conducive to greater success in an organization. Such investigation can also help in

determining the suitability of test for selection of executives in organizations.

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